



HAWTHORNE

Fine Art

Hildegarde H. Hamilton (1898-1970)

4 Gramercy Park, Mayor Harper's House, Manhattan. C. 1930

Oil on canvas board

14 x 11 inches

Signed lower right

Inscribed with location verso

Hildegarde Hume Hamilton was born in 1898 in Syracuse, New York to Maude Hume Hamilton and Dr. James Henry Hamilton, a Professor of Economics and Sociology. A trip to Europe with her father at the age of 6 sparked the young girl's interest in art. She returned to Europe in 1909 to study art in the cities of Geneva, Florence and Berlin. The young artist completed her high school years in Plainfield, NJ while also attending classes at the Art Students League in New York City and the Summer Landscape School in Woodstock. She received a degree in art from the University of Arizona in 1921.

Hamilton returned to Europe and spent five years studying in Paris at the Academie Julian, the Academie Colarossi, the Ecole des Beaux Arts, and the Academie de la Grande Chaumiere. Outside of Paris she studied at the L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Toulouse, the Academia de Bellas Artes in Seville, and at the Proctor School of Modern Landscape Painting in Cornwall. While aboard a ship headed to Grenoble, France Hamilton met Captain Lucien Hobart Ryland. The two became engaged a month later and married upon their return to the U.S in 1926. They had two children together.

Back in the United States, Hamilton studied for a short time at the Herron Art Institute in Indianapolis, the Cincinnati Art Academy and under the tutelage of the landscape and maritime painter Anthony Thieme (1888-1954) in Rockport, Massachusetts. The Ainslie Galleries on Fifth Avenue held an exhibit of Hamilton's French Alpine Scenes to much acclaim. Hamilton exhibited in venues throughout the city and sold as many as 300 landscapes.

Hamilton spent the next four decades traveling extensively and exhibiting her work at home and abroad. In 1927, Vice President Charles Gates Dawes acquired one of Hamilton's paintings following her one person exhibit at the Women's National Party Headquarters in Washington D.C. In the autumn of 1928, an exhibition of her landscapes and cityscapes at the Galerie Bernheim Jeune in Paris was widely and positively reviewed. In 1929, she became the first American woman to exhibit at Philip Dillon's club – L'Artistique, in Provence. She also contributed to the Salon des Artistes Independants in Paris.

In 1930, Hamilton exhibited at the Carlton Hotel in Washington D.C. and in New York at the Grand Central Palace, American Art Association-Anderson Galleries on 57th Street, and the Huntington Bay and Yacht Clubs. During this period, the artist resided at 9 Gramercy Park in New York City. The picturesque neighborhood inspired Hamilton's painting entitled *4 Gramercy Park, Mayor Harper's House, Manhattan. C. 1930*. The oil painting captures the red brick façade and intricate cast iron embellishments of 4 Gramercy Park, the former home of publisher and New York City Mayor James Harper (1795-1869). The two lamps at the foot of the steps signify the home was a mayoral residence and remain at the sight to this day.



HAWTHORNE

Fine Art

In 1932, Hamilton was elected a non-resident member of the National Arts Club and was provided with gallery space at 15 Gramercy Park. Between 1933 and 1935, Hamilton held several one-person shows in Turkey, Bulgaria and Germany. In 1936, she exhibited in New York City at the Pen and Brush Club. The following year, Hamilton bought a home on the Tarpon River in Fort Lauderdale. The vacation home later became the artist's permanent residence and studio.

Hamilton spent the summer of 1946 in Nassau, Bahamas and returned each summer for the remainder of her life. She held her first one-person exhibition in Nassau in 1949. During the summer of 1954, Hamilton showed her work twice a week at the Lucerne Hotel. In 1955, Hamilton exhibited at the National Arts Club. In 1963, she exhibited in Lima, Peru at Galerias Ivaldi. A decade later, Hamilton made trips to Brazil, Argentina, and Ecuador.

Hamilton's prolific career included several milestones never before achieved by a woman artist. She is said to be the first woman to paint inside the "Holy of Holies," a Turkish Harem in Istanbul and a Mohammedan Harem in Tangier. She was the first woman artist to study at the Academia de Bellas Artes in Seville, Spain and permitted to paint in the city's Royal Gardens.

An exhibition at New York's Pen and Brush Club in 1970 was Hamilton's final exhibition. Hildegarde Hume Hamilton died on January 22, 1970. She was 72 years old.

Biographical details sourced from Askart.